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*Forrest Gump* Critique

The 1994 film *Forrest Gump* is a phenomenal movie, throwing you into the major historical events of the late 20th century alongside an unexpected hero. The title character, played by Tom Hanks, is a naïve, simple-minded Alabama native. Forrest unintentionally becomes a college football star, decorated war hero, national Ping-Pong champion, and owner of a multimillion dollar shrimp company alongside his single mother (Sally Field), ill-fated war buddy (Mykelti Williamson), legless ex-Lieutenant (Gary Sinise), and the love of his life—Jenny (Robin Wright). *Forrest Gump* is an unforgettable story of creating one’s own destiny and has outstanding special effects, costuming, and music.

Throughout the movie, different special effects are used to enhance the realism of the story. Various times Forrest appears alongside JFK, Nixon, John Lennon, and several other past celebrities in digitally altered historical footage. Explosions were created, his leg braces fly off of his legs in slow-motion as Forrest runs, and a feather floats through the air to Forrest. Most notably, CGI was used to remove Lieutenant Dan’s legs—actor Gary Sinise does indeed have legs. Many of these effects are so well done that they are hardly noticeable as CGI, making the events seem truly real.

In order to make the setting believable as Forrest passes through different time periods, music and costumes were carefully selected. In Forrest’s childhood, Elvis’s rock-n-roll is heard; during the Vietnam War, Jenny wears hippie clothes and sings music about peace and love; and as the 70s set in, she is seen at clubs, surrounded by drug-culture and Disco. The details also contribute to the realism of the film’s events.

*Forrest Gump*, though made almost ten years ago, is still extremely well-known today. Many people, young and old, still recognize certain quotes from the screenplay. “Run Forrest, run!” and “Life is like a box of chocolates” are just a few of the famous lines. Also, Bubba Gump Shrimp Company has become a real restaurant chain and is quite popular. These examples show how memorable the movie’s screenplay is, impacting the public across generations.

*Forrest Gump* is, in my opinion, a modern classic. It has influenced countless people, and still continues to do so. It’s touching, yet heart-wrenching, story along with its detailed effects and profoundly subtle message give it universal appeal. *Forrest Gump* has many lessons, but the biggest one is that you can determine your own destiny, no matter what setbacks may befall you.